

Milwaukie Baseball Park Citizen Task Force

Meeting #2 - Thursday, February 23, 2012

St. John the Evangelist Church

Task Force Members Attending: Jennifer Finn, Matt Rinker, Gary Hunt, Pepi Anderson, Dan Senffner, Alan Keser, John Fox, Susan McCarty, Harry Hanna, Angel Falconer, Joe Mabe.

Task Force Members Not Attending: Wilda Parks, Mike Gits.

6:30pm: Facilitator Alice Norris called the meeting to order. Introduced Kenny Asher, Director of Community Development as City Staff representative; Bob Collier from Capitol Project Consultants; Milwaukie Councilor Joe Loomis. Allowed members of the public to introduce themselves.

6:33pm: Alice asked everyone to double check their e-mail address on the roster because there had been some bounced e-mails. Alice reviewed the main agenda items – economic impact considerations; revisiting the orientation options; programming options. Alice reviewed the documents everyone should have. Introduced Anton Foss, 360 Architects.

6:37pm: Alice Norris turned the meeting over to Kenny Asher to begin economic analysis study. Kenny asked if they could move the orientation discussion to the front of the agenda since the impacted property owners were in attendance.

- Kenny reviewed the discussion from meeting #1 and revisited the direction of the task force – asked Kenny to check in with the City Council regarding their appetite for acquiring more land; meet with the property owners; and analyze equivalent land values. Kenny said we should keep the option on the table based on the council's feedback. Kenny said it was very difficult to find comparable sales data since there hasn't been a lot of sales. Both properties were purchased for \$600,000 and have been improved. Kenny said you will find there is other value to the property since both businesses on the properties are successful. Kenny asked the Cache brothers to make a short statement to the task force.
- Terry Cache spoke to the task force. Terry gave history of the business and explained that it was founded by their parents in 1946. They acquired the property after owner tried to lease the property. Terry said the property is a great location on McLoughlin and close to the Sellwood Bridge. He said they were excited about being close to a ballpark, but now they are scared or nervous about the City acquiring the property. Terry said they have 15 employees and they don't generate much traffic on Stub street.
- Lawrence de Block spoke to the task force about his business. He likes the location and has 15 employees. Traffic is in the early morning and around the 4pm hour when his crews return. He is not as invested in the property as the Caches are. Moving is an easy option, but he loves the location of the business. He said he is in a similar situation to the Cache brothers company. Lawrence said that one challenge is that it is difficult to find a property that is the right size is difficult. You either find one too big or too small.

- Angel asked the business owners about their feeling toward the ballpark if it didn't impact their property. Both believe that a ballpark could be good for their property if they don't have to move because it will improve their property value. Cache brothers said they love option #2.
- Kenny recommended that this be put at the front of the agenda for the third meeting of the Task Force. Kenny asked if the property owners could return for the next meeting and they agreed.
- Matt Rinker asked for a clarification about the properties that would be acquired in option #3.

6:55pm: Kenny moved the meeting to the economic impact analysis. Kenny reported that seven companies responded to the request for proposals from the City. Kenny said the final analysis will be based partially on the task force input and partially on the advice of the selected company. Kenny said the selection committee will be himself, J. Isaac and Councilor Loomis. Kenny invited the local firms to attend and introduced Eric Hovey, who was in attendance. Kenny reviewed documents for the committee (attached).

- Kenny explained document #1 – All Proposals Included. Kenny said that market analysis is highly dependent on how the new ballpark will be used. Kenny explained some of the differences in the proposals and why he is asking task force members to complete document #2 with different factors that can go into an economic analysis report. Kenny asked Eric Hovey and Jerry Jaffe to talk about what goes into an economic impact analysis. Jerry said that it is important for the firm that they hire to inform public policy not make public policy.
- Alice Norris recommended that the task force review the RFP in their binders.
- Angel asked if case studies and locally collected data are the same.
- Kenny said that he purposely split them off because some case studies probably won't be local, but market analysis will need to use local data. Kenny said that things like the question of re-development almost all you have to go on are case studies.
- Eric said he felt that case studies wouldn't be as important in this situation because of the uniqueness of the Portland metro situation.
- Gary Hunt asked if we need to be looking at triple A v. single A.
- Pepi said that she brought it up at the last meeting.
- Anton Foss said that the difference between the two is important to the facility design.
- Joe Mabe asked if they could move the discussion through each topic to organize the discussion.

7:22pm Alice said that she would like to follow Joe's suggestion and began running through each topic:

1. Firm Has a Local Presence
 - Matt said he would rank that pretty high.
 - Joe said he liked it for the accountability factor.
 - Pepi agreed as well as long as we have a local firm that has the appropriate expertise.
2. Firm Has a Focus on Sports Facilities
 - Gary said focus isn't important, but they should have experience on sports facilities.

- Dan said he's not sure that a sports facility is that unique.
 - Joe asked if there was an analysis of the Keizer Volcanoes. Kenny said that the local firms all have some experience with sports, but it's not their only focus.
3. Triple A v. Single A analysis
 - Matt said that this does matter for option #3.
 4. More reliance on Case Studies
 5. More reliance on locally collected data.
 - Dan asked what data they would look at. Eric said one big variable will be the additional uses of the facility.
 - Matt said the proposals seem to be relying on different factors. He asked how the sense of the task force will be used. Kenny said it will be used to select the firm and define the scope of the study.
 - Pepi said that she didn't believe case studies were as important.
 - Joe said he believes we need to have both case studies and local data. He said he believes they are interdependent on each other.
 6. Includes Review of Facility Design
 - Kenny said that some of the firms believe that the design of the stadium has a large impact on the economic feasibility of a stadium.
 - Anton said that 360's approach is not to take a "cookie cutter" approach and design it unique to the needs of the community because they believe it has an impact on the ballpark's success.
 7. Includes Review of Non-Economic Benefits
 - Kenny said this includes any intangible that doesn't include dollars or revenue.
 8. Includes Demand Analysis for Non Baseball Tenants
 - Joe asked if this factors into the financial success of the ballpark.
 9. Includes Redevelopment Opportunity Analysis
 - No comments
 10. Containing costs on the EIA
 - John asked if there is a budget. Kenny said yes, but it's not exact because it is included in the overall budget.

7:48pm: Alice asked how Kenny would like to use the questions from the public.

- Kenny said that he gave the questions to the task force to remind them how important this question is to the community. Kenny said we will collect the task force “votes”.
- Jennifer asked if the Task Force can get the paperwork prior to the meeting next time. Kenny said he will do his very best next time, but they are very short staffed.

7:50pm: Break

8:06pm: Alice Norris called the meeting back to order and turned the meeting over to Anton Foss for his presentation on programming.

- Anton said he would like to do the presentation and then ask the task force for their input.
- Anton began his presentation about programming options (attached).
- Anton made a special point that youth sports and programming like that has value beyond simply the rental fee. The number of “eyes” in a stadium ads significant advertising value to the ballpark.

8:25pm: Anton completed presentation and asked the task force to add programming ideas to the list

- Year round farmers market – Jennifer Finn
- Community center with a pool – Jennifer Finn
- Jogging trail around the ballpark – Joe Mabe
- Anton made the point that amenities in the ballpark such as suites can take away some of these programming options.
- Angel asked which of the programming options were revenue generators and which were simply a community benefit.
- Anton said that is tough to know because, as he said previously, a big part of an economic analysis is simply how much traffic is in the stadium. Anton reviewed the list and gave his view of which are revenue generators.
- Dan asked how the outside events work. Does the city operate the facility? Anton turned the question over to J. Isaac.
- J. introduced himself and explained there are many different ways a facility can be generated. J. said that typically the team leases the ballpark to the baseball team, which then operates the facility. But he said there are other ways to do it. J. said from a cost point of view the City should try and get as much flexibility as possible while offloading the expense for operation the ballpark to the team.
- Matt asked if it is typical to have a long term lease. J. said that he thinks that is essential for this work and get a long term commitment from the franchise.
- Jean Baker said her understanding was that when the basketball players were on strike that the City of Portland had to pay the bill. J. said that the City gets a 6% ticket tax on all tickets and parking garages. The damage to the City was the lost the revenue from the lost ticket sales and parking revenues. The City had built a reserve that protected them. Anton made the point that minor league teams don’t go on strike.

- Kenny said it has been made very clear that this facility will have to be multi use, but it was clear there wasn't a community consensus about what that meant – some input was based on programming some input was based on making this a multi-purpose facility that served as a type of "civic center".
- J. said that the ballpark as currently conceived will take up the entire blueprint of the site. What he thinks is exciting is the historic building that will allow more uses than a typical ballpark. J. also said that things like suites are included they will allow things like premium events.
- Anton concurred about the importance of the historic building.
- Pepi said that she agrees that it has to have more use than just a brew pub like the McMenamins Kennedy School. She said she wants it to be something that draws people into the City from outside of the Milwaukie.
- Anton said there are all types of possibilities. J. pointed out that the Oregon Sports Museum has lost their site and all of their items are in storage.

8:41pm: Alice opened the meeting up for public comment

- Jean Baker - asked how many games are played at home. The answer was 38 home games.
- Steve Armherst – Steve asked the task force to consider the defensibility of the ballpark. He said that we need to understand that a ton of teams like the Beavers could look at coming back if Single A succeeds. If a triple A decides to move back here you might want to consider accommodating a larger team.
- Steve Hubbard – he said that there are big recess leagues in Portland that about 7,000 20 – 40 year olds play games like kick ball. Why couldn't we use the Milwaukie ballpark for tournaments.
- Tim Salyers – Today he received an Oregonian article about a brewery coming into international way meaning there could be more options than McMenamins. Tim said he's all about community pride. Born and raised here 2nd generation Mustang. He believes community pride is a hugely important factor. He thinks that other organizations and cities don't view Milwaukie positively. Having said that, he's not sure that it's necessary in an economic analysis report. Tim added again that he would hope that the team will want indoor batting cages and his organization would like use of that. He said the league would pitch in to cover the cost for the use of that facility.

8:49pm: Alice close public comment and re-opened task force discussion.

- Jennifer Finn said she has heard from members of the community that they are excited about the brew pub and not as excited about baseball. That is why she brought up the pool idea because she thinks the facility needs to be more than just baseball.
- Matt asked for a bit of history about the Portland Beavers leaving Portland. Steve Armherst gave the history.
- Joe asked J. what he thought the two most important economic indicators are for the success of a ballpark. J. said that Portland is the largest city in the U.S.A. that doesn't have any level of baseball and Milwaukie is so centrally located. J. said that Single A drew as much as the Triple A

team because of weather, which makes this a potentially better deal for Milwaukie. To J. it's about the market, the location and that single A will generate as much revenue as single A.

8:55pm: Alice asked the task force to revisit civic center v. baseball specific facility.

- Susan said it needs to be inclusive of the community, but that we don't need to build new facilities when we already have them. We need to improve the facilities we already have. She said it has to have more uses than just baseball.
- Gary said that we can't lose focus. It's going to be challenging to find the funding as it is.
- Pepi said that if this project will help us complete other projects like waterfront park. We might not be able to draw the whole plan for more development, but this is the base for that to happen.
- Angel asked if there are any libraries connected to ballparks. Anton said that some of the facilities they have designed or that he has been to that are athletic facilities that served as community centers, mostly related to athletics. Angel asked to add museum to the list.
- Joe echoed Gary's comments. It's hard enough to figure out if a baseball park is feasible but it seems like we should stick to community events that we know will work in a baseball park. It seems almost impossible to talk about events that don't revolve around sports, which is why he brought up the jogging trail.
- Kenny said he's hearing a general consensus, and asked if the task force is convinced that sticking to uses that don't add a lot of cost will make the facility used 150 – 160 nights a year.
- Alan said he's confused about why libraries are in the conversation. Kenny said it's been discussed and he wanted to get the sense of the park.
- Susan said that she felt a lot of people were adding different things to the project to make it their dream project.
- Matt wanted to know if this would lead to the need for a City facility staff position that would need to work to book events. Alice said that question should be added to the list.
- Angel asked if we could add the list of possible uses to the website. Alice said we will.
- Pepi said she keeps thinking of driving into Vancouver and drives by delta park and notices how empty they are. She thinks we are doing this the right way with non sports uses.
- John said that we have to allow multi uses or the community won't approve it.
- Jean Baker asked what the design life of a customary ballpark? Anton said 30 – 50 years. Anton said they just helped refurbish a ballpark that was built in 1928.

9:11pm: Kenny said they will look at a pool option. Kenny wanted a specific discussion about concerts.

- J. Isaac said that Portland is a great market for live music. Typically Portland get's better results than other markets of this size. J. said that smaller venues are starting to get the bulk of the business due to many factors. The future of the music business is in smaller outdoor venues. In his view there's no question concerts would succeed in this facility. The question should be whether you want to do the business. He said there are choices you can make that will give you some control.

- Matt said that concerts are going to be topic of major concern for Ardenwald neighbors. And since we've already been told that PA systems are the major source of noise this could be very invasive in the lives of Ardenwald neighbors. Concerts that go late past 10pm are probably not going to fly.
- Angel said that she lives right next to the where the ballpark will be, but she doesn't think concerts should be written off. It seems that we can put limits on it and make it work.
- Susan said this is perfect for a good neighbor agreement and we are going to have big control over the scope of it.
- Alan said he didn't think we had to design because they can be added at any given time. Kenny said there are some cost implications.
- Joe said he believes that there can be community collaboration on concerts. This is going to mold into the community and if done right this can build repore with the neighbors.
- J. Isaac agreed that there are concerts and then there are concerts. He felt that something could work like a free concert series where the City gets to dictate exactly what it will be.
- Kenny asked J. to give his point of view of the economic study criteria. J. felt that understanding the market in Portland is critical, but really important is someone who already has a great deal of knowledge about comparable facilities. He said we already know triple A v. Single A and we want the report to confirm what we already know. He believes demand analysis is not as important, and we need a bit of redevelopment opportunities because it's a key part of the economic impact.

9:31: Alice adjourned the meeting.